

# Coastal saltmarsh

Full report outputted on the 30/07/2003 16:26:11

## 1. Status of the habitat / species

Please give your most accurate assessment of the status of your species or habitat for the UK and for each country. Leave the row blank where the species or habitat does not occur in that country.

	Amount:	Units:	Year:	Accuracy:	Reference for data:
<b>UK</b>	45820	<input type="text"/>	1989	Full survey	Saltmarsh Survey of Great Britain
<b>E</b>	32500	<input type="text"/>	1989	Full survey	Saltmarsh Survey of Great Britain
<b>NI</b>	250	<input type="text"/>	1989	Full survey	Saltmarsh Survey of Great Britain
<b>S</b>	6981	<input type="text"/>	2002	Partial or sample survey	Stewart Angus, SNH - pers com
<b>W</b>	6089	<input type="text"/>	1989	Full survey	Saltmarsh Survey of Great Britain

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## 2. Trend in Biological Status

Please give your best estimate of the current trend for your species or habitat for the UK, and each appropriate country, using the following categories. Please give an estimate unless there is absolutely no information on which to assess status.


	Trend:	Accuracy:	Reference for data:
<b>UK</b>	Declining (continuing/accelerating) ▼	Partial or sample survey ▼	
<b>E</b>	Declining (continuing/accelerating) ▼	Partial or sample survey ▼	Erosion of the saltmarshes of Essex, 1988 - 1998
<b>NI</b>	Declining (slow ing) ▼	Informed guess ▼	
<b>S</b>	Stable ▼	Best guess ▼	
<b>W</b>	Declining (slow ing) ▼	Partial or sample survey ▼	

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### 3. Status of knowledge

To what extent is our scientific knowledge of the habitat / species (e.g research information, autecological knowledge, knowledge for effective re-introduction or habitat restoration/re-creation) sufficient to deliver the plan targets?

Please give an assessment for the UK overall but if there is significant difference in knowledge between different countries this should be noted.

<b>Status of knowledge:</b>	Know ledge sufficient to make some impact, but more research needed. 
<b>Notes:</b>	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px;">         Surveys have been undertaken in the locations w ith the estimate highest losses but further surveys required in England and Wales       </div>

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## 4. Progress on targets

Each of the revised targets from the 2001 Targets Review is listed below.

For each one please give a qualitative assessment of progress for the UK and each country. You can also enter quantitative information on progress by entering data in each of the target boxes and entering the current amount in the amount box. For more information see Help.

**T1: There should be no further net loss (currently estimated at 100 ha/year) of coastal saltmarsh. This will involve the creation of 100 ha/year during the period of this plan.**

<b>Target start date:</b>	<input type="text" value="1999"/>
<b>Target end date:</b>	<input type="text" value="2015"/>
<b>Target units:</b>	<input type="text"/>

	Progress	Target	Current	Accuracy	Monitoring
<b>UK</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	1500	127	Full survey ▼	Yes ▼
<b>E</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	1350	127	Full survey ▼	Yes ▼
<b>NI</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	0	0	Best guess ▼	▼
<b>S</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	0	0	Best guess ▼	▼
<b>W</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	150	0	Best guess ▼	▼

**T2: Create a further 40 ha of saltmarsh in each year of the plan to replace the 600 ha lost between 1992 and 1998, based on current estimates.**

Target start date:

1999

Target end date:

2015

Target units:

▼

**Progress**

**Target**

**Current**

**Accuracy**

**Monitoring**

<b>UK</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	600	43	Full survey ▼	Yes ▼
<b>E</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	540	43	Full survey ▼	Yes ▼
<b>NI</b>	No progress ▼	0		▼	▼
<b>S</b>	No progress ▼	0	0	▼	▼
<b>W</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	60	0	Full survey ▼	▼

**T3: Maintain the quality of the existing resource in terms of community and species diversity.**

Target start date: 1999

Target end date: ongoing

Target units: ▼

	Progress	Target	Current	Accuracy	Monitoring
<b>UK</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	45500		Best guess ▼	No ▼
<b>E</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	32500		Best guess ▼	No ▼

<b>NI</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	250		Best guess ▼	No ▼
<b>S</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	6685		Best guess ▼	No ▼
<b>W</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	6100		Best guess ▼	No ▼

**T4: Where necessary, restore the nature conservation interest through appropriate management. It will be desirable for some managed realignment sites to develop the full range of saltmarsh zonation.**

Target start date:

Target end date:

Target units:

	Progress	Target	Current	Accuracy	Monitoring
<b>UK</b>	Unknown ▼	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>E</b>	Unknown ▼	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>NI</b>	Unknown ▼	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>S</b>	Unknown ▼	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

<b>W</b>	Unknown				
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## 5. Current factors affecting the habitat

When your plan was published the factors (threats) that were thought to be causing loss or decline were listed (in section 2). Re-assessing the current situation may help prioritise actions for your species or habitat. In addition, this enables identification of the main threats to biodiversity across all plans. It is useful to assess whether the importance of different factors is changing and whether there are new issues emerging.

The threat section from the original plan is duplicated below, and a first attempt at categorising the threats has been made. Please confirm that you agree with the categorisation of the original threats identified in the plan (by deleting any wrongly categorised threats and adding the correct category). Please also add to the list any significant threats that have emerged recently, being mindful of environmental issues that have increased in profile or been recognised since plan publication (e.g. climate change). Once you are happy that the list contains all the threats identified in the published plan together with any new ones, please rank them in order of severity (1= highest threat). If the situation has changed and one of the published threats is no longer significant, please leave this in the list but give this rank = 0.

### Current factors affecting the habitat from the original publication:

- 2.1 Large scale saltmarsh land claim schemes for agriculture are now rare. Piecemeal smaller scale land claim for industry, port facilities, transport infrastructure and waste disposal is still comparatively common, and marina development on saltmarsh sites occurs occasionally. Such developments usually affect the more botanically diverse upper marsh and landward transition zones.
- 2.2 Erosion of the seaward edge of saltmarshes occurs widely in the high energy locations of the larger estuaries as a result of coastal processes. There is evidence that this process is exacerbated both by the isostatic tilting of Britain towards the south-east, and by climatic change leading to a relative rise in sea level and to increased storminess. Many saltmarshes are being 'squeezed' between an eroding seaward edge and fixed flood defence walls. The erosional process is exacerbated in some locations by a reduced supply of sediment. 'Coastal squeeze' is most pronounced in south-east England, where, for example, it is estimated that 20% of the saltmarsh resource in Kent and Essex was lost between 1973 and 1988. The best available information suggests that saltmarshes in the UK are being lost to erosion at a rate of 100 ha a year. In more western and northern regions, there is recent evidence of

a trend towards net sea level rise which may be causing saltmarsh erosion, although the rates of loss are not known.

- 2.3 Accretion and development of saltmarsh is occurring on parts of the British coastline, notably in north-west England where sediments are comparatively coarse and isostatic uplift largely negates sea level rise. However this accretion is not sufficient to offset the national net loss of saltmarsh, and in many cases the newly created habitats differ from those being lost due to the regional differences referred to in 1.1.4.
- 2.4 Local sediment budgets may be affected by coast protection works, or by changes in estuary morphology caused by land claim, dredging of shipping channels and the impacts of flood defence works over the years.
- 2.5 The small cordgrass, *Spartina maritima*, is the only species of cordgrass native to Great Britain. The smooth cordgrass, *S. alterniflora*, is a naturalised alien that was introduced to the UK in the 1820s . This introduction led to its subsequent crossing with *S. maritima* resulting in both a sterile hybrid, Townsend's cordgrass *S. townsendii*, and a fertile hybrid, common cordgrass *S. anglica*. The latter readily colonises mudflats and has spread around the coast. It has also been extensively planted to aid stabilisation of mudflats and as a prelude to land-claim. Common cordgrass often produces extensive monoculture swards of much less intrinsic value to wildlife, and in many areas is considered to be a threat to bird feeding grounds on mudflats. As a result, attempts have been made to control it at several locations, although in some areas it is undergoing dieback for reasons not fully understood.
- 2.6 Grazing has a marked effect on the structure and composition of saltmarsh vegetation by reducing the height of the vegetation and the diversity of plant and invertebrate species. Intensive grazing creates a sward attractive to wintering and passage wildfowl and waders, whilst less intense grazing produces a tussocky structure which favours breeding waders. In recent decades, some grazed saltmarshes have been abandoned, leading to domination of the mid to upper marsh by rank grasses. Intensive grazing is considered to be a problem in some areas
- 2.7 Saltmarshes are affected by a range of other human influences including waste tipping, pollution, drowning by barrage construction, and military activity. Turf cutting is a traditional activity in some areas. Oil pollution can potentially destroy saltmarsh vegetation and whilst it usually recovers, sediment may be lost during the period of die-back. The effects of recreational pressure are not well understood but may be locally significant. Agricultural improvement (re-seeding and draining) has affected the upper edge and transition zones of some saltmarshes in the past and may still occur on a small scale. Eutrophication due to sewage effluent and agricultural fertiliser run-off has caused local problems of algal growth on saltmarshes.

## Keyworded factors:

To add factors click the add button, to delete factors check the delete box and then click the delete button.

Delete:	Rank:	Keyword:
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- 4 Habitat loss / degradation - agriculture | Inappropriate grazing (due to timing or livestock type)
- 0 Habitat loss / degradation - agriculture | Re-seeding of pastures / grassland
- 9 Habitat loss / degradation - extraction/drainage | Drainage (for agriculture)
- 0 Habitat loss / degradation - infrastructure development | Coastal defence works
- 2 Habitat loss / degradation - infrastructure development | Dredging (coastal)
- 1 Habitat loss / degradation | Erosion (coastal)
- 6 Human disturbance | Interference / displacement
- 0 Human disturbance | Military use / disturbance
- 5 Invasive/non-native species (directly affecting species) | Competition
- 7 Pollution - freshwater | Agricultural (nutrient enrichment)
- 0 Pollution - freshwater | Sewage
- 8 Pollution - land | Domestic waste disposal
- 10 Pollution - marine | Oil slicks

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## 6. Constraints (optional)

Select the three most significant constraints to achieving the targets of the plan, and indicate the order of priority (1-3 with 1 being the most significant constraint). Only include constraints that are acting as a real blockage to delivering the plan targets or leading to a substantial delay in their delivery. For each constraint, please indicate whether you feel that it is within the ability of the lead partner or steering group to resolve the constraint.

<b>Constraint 1:</b>	
<b>Constraint keyword:</b>	<b>Country:</b>
Funding and incentives   Agency grant - support required	<input type="checkbox"/> UK <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> NI <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> W
<b>Solution:</b>	<b>Solution type:</b>
seperate funding streams for habitat creation, w ith funding from multiple sources	
<b>Able to resolve:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Constraint 2:</b>	
<b>Constraint keyword:</b>	<b>Country:</b>

Funding and incentives   Agricultural schemes - changes needed to structure / payments	<input type="checkbox"/> UK <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> NI <input type="checkbox"/> S
	<input type="checkbox"/> W
<b>Solution:</b>	<b>Solution type:</b>
<input type="text" value="Seek to ensure Countryside Stewardship payments are reviewed to allow for the full long-term costs"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Able to resolve:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Constraint 3:</b>	
<b>Constraint keyword:</b>	<b>Country:</b>
<input type="text" value="Communication   Land managers / owners - lack of advice"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> UK <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> NI <input type="checkbox"/> S
	<input type="checkbox"/> W
<b>Solution:</b>	<b>Solution type:</b>
<input type="text" value="clear guidance on what options are available to landowners"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Able to resolve:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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## 7. Steering Group

Please list all organisations that are represented on the steering group for your species/habitat (include all organisations that have contributed either directly or by correspondence within the last 3 years). Where a steering group does not exist please leave this form blank.

To add organisations click the add button, to delete organisations check the delete box and then click the delete button.

Delete:	Organisation:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Countryside Agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Countryside Council for Wales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<input type="checkbox"/>	English Nature
<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment Agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Heritage Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
<input type="checkbox"/>	National Trust
<input type="checkbox"/>	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

<input type="checkbox"/>	Scottish Natural Heritage
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wildlife Trusts

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## 8. Other Groups/Organisations

Please list any additional groups/organisations that are actively involved in implementing your action plan. (This is to try to assess which groups are involved where there is no steering group and any additional contributors). If you do not have any other organisations involved, click here.

To add organisations click the add button, to delete organisations check the delete box and then click the delete button.

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## 9. Linkages to LBAPs

a) Which of the following most accurately describes your interaction with LBAPs, up to now?

Little or no contact with LBAPs.	
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b) If you have been in contact with LBAPs how was it initiated?


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c) Irrespective of current contact, how important do you consider LBAP co-ordinated action will be in achieving the targets of the plan? Select from category:

Critical ▼

d) If you consider LBAP action to be anything other than unimportant, which of the following forms of engagement do you think would be appropriate? (Note, you may tick more than one category.)

- Indirect contact (e.g. posting information on UKBAP website, sharing work programmes, meeting schedules, articles in Biodiversity News, newsletter)
- Provision of generic information on habitat and/or species (e.g. advice and guidance on habitat/species ecology and management)
- Direct provision of advice (e.g. proactive approach to LBAP, response to consultations from LBAPs, advice on LBAP target setting)
- Reciprocal attendance at meetings
- Development of collaborative projects

**Other (please specify):**

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## 10. Successes (optional)

Have there been key successes in the implementation of your plan that should be drawn to the attention of government, the wider BAP partnership, or the public? Please give a brief description (i.e. 2-3 sentences) of up to three successes and allocate a topic area to each of them:

## Success 1:

### Description:

DEFRA Flood Management have established a no net loss policy as part of the High Level Targets for Operating Authorities. Controlled form of land acquisition for operating authority in England with regard to Natura 2000 network.

### Country:

UK  E  NI  S  W

### Keyword:

Policy, legislation and designation | Beneficial changes in UK legislation

## Success 2:

### Description:

Completion of Humber Estuary Shoreline Management Plan. Preparation of seven pilot Coastal Habitat Management Plans, commencement of estuary strategies in Essex and Suffolk.

### Country:

UK  E  NI  S  W

### Keyword:

Policy, legislation and designation | Improved protection through site designation - international (SPA, SAC, RAMSAR)

### Success 3:

**Description:**

Better understanding of habitat creation through demonstration sites

**Country:**

UK  E  NI  S  W

**Keyword:**

Species and habitat management | Habitat creation / restoration - achieved

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Thankyou for answering the questions. You have not yet completed all of the questions. You can go back and answer the additional ones or edit the ones you have already answered whenever you want.

**Sign-off:**

When you have completed all of the questions that you are able to, you must sign off your reporting.

I agree that the steering group (if present) have agreed the information in this report and that the following contact point has also signed it off:

<b>Contact point:</b>	Brian Empson	<b>email:</b>	Brian.Empson
<b>Your name:</b>	Brian Empson		

**Date:**

23rd Dec 2002

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